

FALL 2007 STRENGTHENING HOMES AND FAMILIES

Family and Consumer Studies 3630

Section One: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:10 to 10:30 a.m. in AEB 310

Section Two: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4:35 to 5:55 p.m. in AEB 350

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Office Hours: Mondays thru Thursdays 2:00 - 3:00 p.m., and/or by appointment

ON-LINE COPY OF CURRENT COURSE SYLLABUS AVAILABLE AT:

<http://www.fcs.utah.edu/faculty/herrin/>

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Families have long been considered the basic unit of our communities and society. From this vantage point, as go families, so go communities and society. The institution of the family can then be understood and studied as a microcosm of neighborhoods, communities, and society. We also have come to understand much more clearly how our neighborhoods, communities, and society shape our families and provide (or do not provide) them encouragement, support, and protection in varying degrees and forms as families endeavor to fulfill their pivotal roles. While these matters are at once social and psychological, they are also economical, political, and philosophical. For us to understand these interdependent relationships we must also become mindful of those things that will make them healthier and stronger as well as more responsive, adaptive, and resilient. Not everyone agrees on what this means should be done, how it should be done, and who should do it. But just about everyone agrees that something should be done. One very important question we will explore is whether families are declining and doing poorly or adapting and doing well. The experts do not agree. However, the experts do agree that there are a number of very critical issues facing contemporary families and, therefore, our communities and society.

There are a host of family issues (some consider them “problems”) — cohabitation, out-of-wedlock births, single parenting, divorce, fathers who don’t provide economic and social support to their children, child and spouse abuse, to name a few — that involve individuals and couples in partnerships, marriages, and families in ways that result in great costs to those individuals and families. Such costs are even more enormous and consequential as they are carried into and manifested in our neighborhoods, communities and society. Part of our course of study will be to assess and understand these costs and what can be done by individuals, families, and our communities to understand them and resolve the related problems where possible. Before we study some of these problems in greater depth and detail, we need to become familiar with some of the important questions regarding contemporary families that are being asked by interested parties in our culture and society today. A major objective of this course is to understand these important questions and how they are variously perceived and answered within different relevant points of view.

What are families? What are families for? Who belongs to them? How do you become a family?

Is cohabitation with someone else sufficient to become a family?

Is marriage to someone else necessary to become a family?

Does your partner have to be a member of the opposite sex or can he or she be of the same sex?

Do you have to create or adopt a child before you can become a family?

Can all adults parent children well enough?

Should all adults be allowed to adopt and rear children?

Who are the best parents for the optimal development of children?

Do these parents need to be coupled in some way?

Do the couples need to be heterosexual or can they be homosexual or bisexual?

Although we may not be able to explore all of these questions, it is through our study of them that we will learn that the experts on these matters do not agree on the answers to these questions. We will also become more aware of the complex concerns and issues that are relevant to the study of strong, resilient, and successful families and the things that make them

so. Fortunately, there is much more agreement amongst the experts on the characteristics of strong families. Other matters of focus for this course are building and preserving (1) successful, strong, healthy, and resilient individuals and families, (2) secure, stable, warm, and open home environments to house and sustain them, and (3) supportive, responsive, and cohesive communities to surround and sustain them.

We live in a culture that accentuates the bizarre, negative, and dysfunctional. In contrast, considerable research has documented the kinds of things that characterize strong and healthy relationships, marriages, and families, such as respectful, appreciative, and supportive relationships, processes, interactions, activities, communication, listening, problem solving, conflict resolution, and coping strategies. A major objective of the course is to study these characteristics with the intent of learning to recognize and create them in our own individual lives, marriages, families, and communities as antidotes to the negative images, messages, and emphases in our society. The course will emphasize the things we have learned through research that couples and families do to provide for individual, family, and community well-being amidst the many challenges facing them in our society. This requires that we acquire an understanding of the workings of relationships, partnerships, marriages, and family systems that are strong, healthy, and resilient which we know contribute to healthy, responsive, and responsible communities. Among other things already mentioned, we also will study things we know to be of importance to strong families and communities, such as shared histories, traditions, and rituals; kinship bonds; intimacy; ethical, spiritual, and religious orientations; coping strategies; parental supervision and monitoring; and ways of reducing delinquency, youth violence, drug abuse.

REQUIRED COURSE READINGS AVAILABLE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH BOOKSTORE

1. Some of the required readings are on "Electronic Reserve" through the Marriott Library.
 - Instructions pertinent to using "E-Reserve" are at the following location on the web: <http://www.lib.utah.edu/circ/reserve/student.html>.
 - To access "e-reserve" readings from an off-campus computer, see instructions at: <http://www.lib.utah.edu/information/remote.html>.
2. Several required readings can be accessed directly from web pages on the internet.
3. Gottman, John Mordechai, and Nan Silver. (2000). *The seven principles for making marriage work*. New York: Three Rivers Press (Crown Publishing Group).
4. Institute for American Values. (2005). *Why marriage matters. Twenty-six conclusions from the Social Sciences*, second edition. New York: Institute for American Values.

Lecture notes for the different reading assignments are available to read and/or download to your own computer from my faculty web site which is located at: <http://www.fcs.utah.edu/faculty/herrin/>. Simply scroll down to the relevant items listed under the section labeled "Current Course Syllabi, Overhead Notes, and Materials." The notes are essentially the text of the overheads that I use in class lectures. Hopefully, by having the notes for a particular lecture when you attend, you can listen more for things that are of interest to you and how the things we are learning might be applied in your own lives and jot down some notes about such things rather than having to copy down all the information on the overheads.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS AVAILABLE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH BOOKSTORE

5. Emery, Robert. (2006.) *The truth about children and divorce : Dealing with the emotions so you and your children can thrive*, reprint edition. New York, NY: Plume Books (Penguin Books).
6. Blankenhorn, David. (2007.) *The future of marriage*. New York: Encounter Books.
7. Brooks, Robert, and Sam Goldstein. (2002.) *Nurturing resilience in our children : Answers to the most important parenting questions*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
8. Page, Susan. (2007.) *Why talking is not enough: 8 loving actions that will transform your marriage*, New Ed edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (J. Wiley).
9. Tannen, Deborah. (2002.) *I only say this because I love you: Talking to your parents, partner, sibs, and kids when you're all adults*, reprint edition. New York: Ballantine Books (Imprint of Random House).
10. Wolfson, Evan. (2005.) *Why marriage matters: America, equality, and gay people's right to marry*, Reprint edition. New York: Simon & Schuster.

COURSE LEARNING DEMONSTRATIONS, ACTIVITIES, AND COURSE “ODDS and ENDS”

EXAMS (80% of total course grade). There are three in-class exams. The highest two of three exam grades are counted for the final grade after the lowest of the three exams is dropped. If you know that you will miss two of the three exams, please realize it will be difficult to get a grade higher than a D. If you are satisfied with your first two exam grades, you do not have to take the third exam. The exams contain approximately 100 to 110 items that are primarily multiple-choice and true/false items with some matching and short fill-in items. Exams cover both topics and content discussed in class and in the readings. **THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP EXAMS.** The exams are scheduled on **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20; THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1; AND DURING THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM PERIOD WHICH IS THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, FROM 8:00 TO 10:00 A.M., FOR SECTION ONE; OR TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, FROM 6:00 TO 8:00 P.M., FOR SECTION TWO.** The third exam is not comprehensive.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES (20% of grade). During most class meetings we engage in activities, as individuals and/or in small groups, that build on your class preparation, readings, and other class activities. A few activities may require work outside of class but most are completed in class. For these activities, you receive credit if you are present, participate, and turn your work in at the end of the particular class meeting with your name on it. Since these activities take place and have their intended meaning within the context of a particular class meeting, you have to be in class to participate and receive credit. Parts of activities missed because you were late in coming to class or activities missed because you were not in class at all, cannot be made up. These exercises are intended to provide experiences with additional forms of learning in addition to reading and listening to lectures. Your grade for these activities will be determined by the percentage of the total number of these activities that you complete in class. There will be at least ten of these activities.

GRADING SCALE. Letter grades are assigned to exam scores and to total points at the end of the term according to the scale of percentages listed below.

	93 - 100 = A	90 - 92.9 = A-
87 - 89.9 = B+	83 - 86.9 = B	80 - 82.9 = B-
77 - 79.9 = C+	73 - 76.9 = C	70 - 72.9 = C-
67 - 69.9 = D+	63 - 66.9 = D	60 - 62.9 = D-
	< 60 = E	

ATTENDANCE POLICY. As a general rule, you need to attend class in order to participate in and receive credit for **IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES** and exams. These activities cannot be made-up except in particular circumstances. According to the University’s Registrar’s guidelines, if you are absent from class to participate in officially sanctioned University activities (e.g. band, debate, student government, intercollegiate athletics), religious obligations, or with instructor's approval, you will be permitted to make up both assignments and examinations. Please inform me in advance of such absences or emergencies if at all possible. More information on this policy is available at <<http://www.acs.utah.edu/sched/handbook/attend.htm>>.

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY. It is very likely that some of our reading materials, lectures, discussions, films, or other presentations in this course will include content that may be at odds with your personal set of values, beliefs, or point of view. This is virtually unavoidable in a class that is designed to help you study and understand the central concerns, issues and perspectives that are relevant to our course of study. We deliberately work at trying to understand multiple viewpoints and what they are based on that are diverse and often in opposition to one another. Only as we do this are we able to more fully and accurately understand the problems, issues, and concerns that are relevant to our class so we can consider possible responses and resolutions. Please carefully review the syllabus, assignments, and readings to determine if you are willing to participate in and contribute to our class as a learning environment and experience. Consequently, accommodations in content or assignments are not offered in our class. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about these or related matters at your earliest convenience. More information on the University of Utah’s Accommodations Policy is available at: <www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/accommodations-policy.pdf>.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL POLICY. Each of you may formally withdraw from the course for academic reasons up through **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19.** If you remain in the course after this date you cannot withdraw for academic reasons at any other time during the term. The online *Student Information System* includes the following “Notice” regarding this matter [see “drop/withdrawal deadlines”]:

After the withdrawal deadline, you may petition for withdrawal if you have a nonacademic emergency. Submit a petition and supporting documentation to the office of the dean of your academic college. Undeclared,




nonmatriculated and premajor students apply to the University College. You must submit the petition to the appropriate dean's office by the last day of regular course instruction preceding the final exam period.

INCOMPLETE POLICY. According to University policy, students must have completed 80% of the course requirements to be eligible for an *“Incomplete”* grade.

REQUESTS for SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS by STUDENTS with DISABILITIES. Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations to meet the expectations and assignments of this course are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor as soon in the term as possible. The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the **Center for Disability Services** <<http://www.sa.utah.edu/ds/>>, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in the course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services. More information is available at: <<http://www.hr.utah.edu/oeo/ada/guide/faculty/>>.


APPROPRIATE CONDUCT. In order to ensure that the highest standards of academic conduct are promoted and supported at the University, students must adhere to generally accepted standards of academic honesty, including but not limited to refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, research misconduct misrepresenting one's work, and/or inappropriately collaborating. Students are also expected to be aware of and adhere to the guidelines for appropriate conduct as articulated in the **CODE OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES** (“STUDENT CODE,” Policy 8-10 Rev 6, enacted February 3, 2006). A copy of the code is available at: <<http://www.admin.utah.edu/ppmanual/8/8-10.html>>.

CLASS MEETINGS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

This schedule is flexible with respect to timing since we may spend more or less time on a topic as determined by class interest. **Exam dates can be taken seriously and planned for accordingly.** The reading assignments itemized below a particular date or dates are to be completed before coming to the date's class meeting. Before each reading, you will find one of several symbols. A ‘’ means the reading can be found on the Web; a ‘’ means the reading can be found on e-reserve; and a ‘’ means the reading can be found in one of the course textbooks.

Class Meeting 1: August 21 INTRODUCTION TO STRENGTHENING HOMES AND FAMILIES

Meetings 2, 3: August 23, 28 WHAT MAKES A FAMILY A FAMILY? WHAT ARE FAMILIES FOR?

 Gittens, Diana. (1985). “What is the family? Is it universal?” In Gittens, *The family question*, second edition. New York: Macmillan.

AUGUST 29

!!!REMINDER: LAST DAY TO DROP COURSES!!!

SEPTEMBER 3

☺ **LABOR DAY — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN!!! ☺**


SEPTEMBER 4

!!!REMINDER: LAST DAY TO ADD COURSES!!!


SEPTEMBER 4

!!!REMINDER: TUITION DUE OR YOUR CLASSES WILL BE CANCELLED!!!


Meetings 4, 5: Aug 30, Sep 4 FAMILIES ARE FOR HAVING CHILDREN OR JUST FOR ADULTS?


 Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Who cares for the children?, in Nuba, H., Searson, M., and Sheiman, D. L. (Eds.), *Resources for early childhood: A handbook*. New York: Garland, 113-129 (edited paper from an address to UNESCO, Paris, 7 September 1989).

Meetings 6, 7, 8: September 6, 11, 13 ARE FAMILIES DECLINING OR ADAPTING AND PROGRESSING?

 Giele, Janet Z. (2005) [1996]. “Decline of the family: Conservative, liberal, and feminist views.” In David Popenoe, Jean Bethke Elshstain, and David Blankenhorn (eds.), *Promises to keep: Decline and renewal of marriage in America*. Lanham: MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 89-115.

Meeting 9: September 18 DOCUMENTING CHANGING PATTERNS IN FAMILIES


 Casper, Lynne M., and Suzanne M. Bianchi. (2005) [2002]. “A ‘quieting’ of family change.” In Andrew J. Cherlin (ed.), *Public and private families: A reader*, fourth edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 5-13.

 RECOMMENDED: The Council on Families in America. (1996). "Marriage in America: A report to the nation." In David Popenoe, Jean Bethke Elshain, and David Blankenhorn (eds.), *Promises to keep: Decline and renewal of marriage in America*. Lanham: MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 293-318.


<http://members.iquest.net/~dkoons/marriage.html>


Meeting 10: September 20 EXAM ONE on materials thru September 18


Meeting 11: September 25 CHARACTERISTICS OF STRONG AND HAPPY FAMILIES

 Olson, David H., and John DeFrain. (1994). "Family strengths and coping strategies." In *Marriage and the family: Diversity and strengths*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 563-575.


Meeting 12: September 27 TO COHABIT OR TO MARRY OR FIRST ONE THEN THE OTHER?


 Popenoe, David, and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead. (2002). "Should we live together? What young adults need to know about cohabitation before marriage: A comprehensive review of recent research, second ed., (A report of the National Marriage Project)." <http://marriage.rutgers.edu/Publications/swlt2.pdf> or <http://www.smartmarriages.com/cohabit.html>

 Solot, Dorian, and Marshall Miller. (2002). "What's wrong with the work of the national marriage project?" and "Ten problems (plus one bonus problem) with the National Marriage Project's Cohabitation Report." A report of the *Alternatives to Marriage Project*. <http://www.unmarried.org/10problems.php>

 Alternatives to Marriage Project. (2002). "Frequently asked questions about cohabitation." <http://www.unmarried.org/cohabfaq.php>


Meetings 13, 14: October 2, 4 PURPOSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF DIVORCE

 Peterson, Karen S. (2002.) "Divorce need not end in disaster," *USA TODAY*, internet edition, 01/13/2002. <http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2002/01/14/usatcov-divorce.htm> or http://www.divorcerecovery.net/resources/newarticles2002/Even_Trying_To_See_The_Bright_Side.htm


 Gallagher, Maggie. (2002.) "Third Thoughts on Divorce. How good does it get?" A book review of *For Better or For Worse: Divorce Reconsidered*, by E. Mavis Hetherington and John Kelly. From the March 25, 2002, issue of *National Review*. <http://www.nationalreview.com/comment/comment-gallagher032502.shtml>.

OCTOBER 8 — 12 ☺ FALL BREAK — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN!!! ☺

Meeting 15: October 16 PREPARATION FOR REMARRIAGE


 Marano, Hara Estroff. "Divorced? Don't even think of remarrying until you read this." *Psychology Today*, March/April 2000. <http://www.smartmarriages.com/remarrying.html>

Meeting 16: October 18 MYTHS AND REALITIES OF SUCCESSFUL, HAPPY MARRIAGES

 Gottman, John M., and Nan Silver. (1999). "Inside the Seattle love lab: The truth about happy marriages," in *The Seven Principles for Making Marriages Work* (Chapter One, 1-24).


OCTOBER 19 !!!REMINDER: LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM TERM COURSES!!!

Meetings 17, 18: October 23, 25 WHY MARRIAGES FALTER

 Gottman. "How I Predict Divorce," in *The Seven Principles...* (Chapter Two, 25-46).

Meeting 19: October 30 BE INTIMATELY FAMILIAR WITH EACH OTHER'S WORLD and HONOR AND RESPECT EACH OTHER

 Gottman. "Principle 1: Enhance Your Love Maps," in *The Seven...* (Chapter Three, 47-60).

 Gottman. "Principle 2: Nurture Your Fondness and Admiration," in *The Seven...* (Chapter Four, 61-77).

Meeting 20: November 1 EXAM TWO on materials from September 25 thru October 30

Meeting 21: November 6 BE EMOTIONALLY ENGAGED, CONNECTED, AND INDEPENDENT
 📖 Gottman. “Principle 3: Turn toward Each Other Instead of Away,” in *The Seven...* (Chapter Five, 79-97).

Meeting 22: November 8 SHARE POWER AND RESPECT EACH OTHER’S VIEWPOINTS
 📖 Gottman. “Principle 4: Let Your Partner Influence You,” in *The Seven...* (Chapter Six, 99-127).

Meetings 23, 24: November 13, 15 UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF YOUR CONFLICTS
 📖 Gottman. “The Two Kinds of Marital Conflict,” in *The Seven...* (Chapter Seven, 129-155).

NOVEMBER 22, 23 ☺ **THANKSGIVING BREAK — NO CLASS — HAVE SOME FUN!** ☺

Meetings 25, 26: November 20, 27 RESOLVING CONFLICT IN A LOVING RELATIONSHIP
 📖 Gottman. “Principle 5: Solve Your Solvable Problems,” in *The Seven...* (Chapter Eight, 157-185).

Meetings 27, 28: Novem 29, Decem 4 COPING WITH AND SOLVING THE RESOLVABLE
 📖 Gottman. “Coping with Typical Solvable Problems,” in *The Seven...* (Chapter Nine, 187-216).

Meeting 29: December 6 IDENTIFY, UNDERSTAND, AND RESPECT EACH OTHER’S IMPORTANT DREAMS
 📖 Gottman. “Principle 6: Overcome Gridlock,” in *The Seven...* (Chapter Ten, 217-241).
 BUILD DEEPER, MORE MEANINGFUL AND REWARDING RELATIONSHIPS
 📖 Gottman. “Principle 7: Create Shared Meaning,” in *The Seven...* (Chapter Eleven, 243-258).

📁 RECOMMENDED: Doherty, William J. (1999). Excerpts from Chapter One (“The intentional family”) and “Becoming a more intentional family” (Chapter Twelve). In *The intentional family: Simple rituals to strengthen family ties*. New York: Avon Books (Morrow), 10-14, 188-199.

📖 Gottman. “Afterword: What Now?” in *The Seven...* (259-266).

TUESDAY, December 11 Section Two: EXAM THREE, in regular classroom on materials from November 6 thru December 6, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, December 13 Section One: EXAM THREE, in regular classroom on materials from November 6 thru December 6, 8:00 to 10:00 a.m.

DECEMBER 27 !!!GRADES AVAILABLE ON THE WEB!!!